Action has been initiated to lay 23 kms. long gas pipeline connecting Dhaula Kuan with GT Kamal Road.

In addition, 50 retail outlets have been identified for co-locating CNG dispensing facility.

Shortage of Kerosene in Rajasthan

2550. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of acute shortage of kerosene in the rural areas of Rajasthan; and

(b) if so, the necessary steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Kerosene is an allocated product and Central Government allocates it to the States/Union Territories on annual basis and same is released on monthly basis. The Central Government also makes additional allocations of kerosene over and above normal allocations to States on requests received from State Governments to meet exigencies like floods, cyclones etc.

The distribution within the State is responsibility of the concerned State Government. Requests are received from various State Governments for enhancement of kerosene quota from time to time. Kerosene is a deficit product in the country and on account of constraints of product availability, foreign exchange outgo and heavy subsidy, the distribution has to be judicious.

Regulatory Authority for Oil and Gas Industry

2551. SHRIYADLAPATIVENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up a regulatory authority to monitor the oil and gas industry in India; and

(b) the other steps proposed to ensure that both private and public enterprises do not concentrate only on urban areas and rural areas are equally covered insetting up of outlets with proper supply and distribution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) In the deregulated

scenario, it will continue to be the duty of the Government to ensure adequate availability of petroleum products to meet the demand at reasonable prices, in all parts of the country. Further, there would be need to ensure that all the players follow the prescribed rules. It is, therefore, recognised that while Government will have an important role even in the deregulated scenario, an empowered body is required to be created to cater to these needs. With these objectives in view, setting up of a "Regulatory Mechanism" for downstream petroleum sector is proposed. For the same reasons, a regulatory mechanism is considered necessary for distribution and marketing of natural gas. Further, with the participation of private oil companies in the exploration and production of oil and gas in the Indian basin, to ensure that exploitation of national mineral resources is optimal, regulatory mechanism in the upstream petroleum sector is also envisaged.

LNG Terminal at Kochi

2552. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal for LNG Terminal at Kochi in Kerala has been approved by Government and given clearance or implementation; and

(b) the state at which the proposal for LNG Terminal stands at present?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Petronet LNG Limited (PLL) a joint venture company promoted by Gas Authority of India Limited, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited, Indian Oil Corporation Limited and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited is setting up a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminal with regassification facilities. The initial capacity of the terminal is 2.5 million tonnes per annum (MTPA). All the pre-project activities have been completed and statutory approvals/clearances have mostly been obtained. PLL has invited offers for development of the terminal through engineering project and construction (EPC) route.

Processing of Seismic Survey Datas

2553. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per the recommendations of Kingston Report, there was drilling holiday in Bengal Basin area under CRBC for three years from 1997;